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ABSTRACT

This essay with photographs describes the experiences of two runaways, examining why they left home and how they found help. Although runaways have a reputation for being irresponsible, they usually have good reasons for leaving home. The nun who ran Noah's Ark, where both the runaways featured found shelter and help, estimated that only about two percent of the runaways she had encountered left home because they were spoiled or simply could not get along at home. The girls profiled left families with substance abuse and child abuse problems. Social workers now tend to refer to runaways in ways that describe their situations, calling them homeless or throwaway youth. In larger cities, where minorities are likely to suffer the effects of poverty, drugs, and abuse, runaways are more likely to come from minority families. Once children leave home, they face a variety of dangers, and their problems can affect society in many ways. Many more programs like the Noah's Ark home that saved these girls are needed. A list of eight resources and seven suggestions for further reading are included. (SLD)

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